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E.O. 12065: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, PINT, SEUM, JA, KS
SUBJECT: FURTHER ON THE KIM DAE JUNG CASE AND ROK-JAPAN RELATIONS
REF: (A) SEOUL 15809, (B) SEOUL 15883,
(C) TOKYO 21027 (NOTAL), (D) TOKYO 21028 (NOTAL)

1. (U) COVERAGE OF ALLEGED JAPANESE INTERFERENCE IN THE KIM DAE JUNG (M-R: KIM TAE-CHUNG) CASE IN THE AFTERNOON VERNACULAR DAILIES NOVEMBER 28 AND THE ENGLISH-LANGUAGE PRESS NOVEMBER 29 TOOK SECOND PLACE TO REPORTS ON THE FORMATION OF NEW PRO-GOVERNMENT POLITICAL PARTY. NEVERTHELESS COVERAGE REMAINS EXTENSIVE, TOUGH AS FAR AS WE ARE ABLE TO DETERMINE ESSENTIALLY ACCURATE.

2. (U) PROTEST ACTIVITY IS REPORTED THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY AGAINST JAPANESE INTERFERENCE. RALLIES WERE HELD IN KWANGJU AND MASAN, AND A SIGNATURE CAMPAIGN

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IN PUSAN NETTED 20,000 SIGNERS IN ONE DAY. THE FEDERATION OF KOREAN TRADE UNIONS IS REPORTED, RATHER FEEBLY, TO BE "CONSIDERING" A NATION-WIDE BOYCOTT AGAINST JAPANESE GOODS.

3. (U) REPORTING IS STRAIGHTFORWARD SO FAR REGARDING THE PERSONAL LETTER JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER SUZUKI ALLEGEDLY CONSIDERED SENDING TO PRESIDENT CHUN VIA RETURNING JAPANESE AMBASSADOR SUNOBE. AFTER REPORTING THE ASAHI SHIMBUN LEAK OF THE ALLEGED CONTENTS OF THE LETTER, (REF C) THE STORIES GO ON TO CITE ACCURATELY PM SUZUKI'S REMARKS BEFORE THE UPPER HOUSE CABINET COMMITTEE ON NOVEMBER 27, IN WHICH HE WAS CAUTIOUS AND CIRCUMSPECT (REF D).

4. (L.C.U.) EDITORIALLY, THERE IS SOME BASIS FOR THE HOPE THAT AT LEAST SOME ELEMENTS IN KOREA SEE THE DANGER OF CONTINUING TO FAN THE FLAMES OF THIS CONTROVERSY.

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THE PRO-GOVERNMENT KYUNGHYANG SHINMUN NOVEMBER 27 URGES REJECTION OF THE JAPANESE INTERVENTION, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME "MAINTAINING SOVEREIGNTY TO DEAL WITH THE KIM CASE". THE TONG-A ILBO, IN A REVEALING GLIMPSE OF THE AMBIVALENT KOREAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE JAPANESE, SAYS THAT KOREANS "OUGHT NOT GET EXCITED", BUT RATHER "DEMONSTRATE PRUDENCE SO THAT JAPANESE PEOPLE WILL NOT DESPISE KOREANS".

5. (L.O.U.) COMMENT. WE HOPE THAT THE ESSENTIALLY FACTUAL REPORTING AND UNINFLAMATORY EDITORIAL COMMENT CITED ABOVE MEANS THAT COOLER HEADS WILL PREVAIL. A KEY TEST MAY BE KOREAN EDITORIAL REACTION TO THE LEAK OF THE PROPOSED SUZUKI LETTER; SO FAR NONE HAS APPEARED.

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